

NATHANIEL CRUZ

STAFF PRODUCT DESIGNER

Product Strategy / Complex Platforms / AI Experiences / Design Systems / Product Engineering

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Product designer and front-end-focused product engineer with 20+ years designing, building, and shipping complex digital products. I turn ambiguous, technically complex problems into clear product strategy, scalable systems, and polished products that ship across every stage, from research and interaction models through implementation. Recent work spans AI decision support, enterprise lending, developer platforms, and global IoT.

EXPERIENCE

TOPANGA.IO Lead Product Designer / Feb 2026 – Present

AI-enabled foodservice intelligence platform supporting 70+ culinary organizations and 500+ kitchens.

Created and named Orbit, StreamLine’s AI assistant, and defined its experience from the ground up, including product positioning, conversational UX, in-dashboard chat, proactive forecast suggestions, confidence states, and plain-language decision flows.

Redesigned the core StreamLine dashboard and high-frequency production-planning workflows, turning complex prep-to-plate data into clear actions. In one documented outcome, an Orbit recommendation kept 30 pounds of fish out of the trash and saved more than \$240 from a single decision.

Led the experience integration of Topanga’s acquired plate-waste technology, defining how hands-free computer-vision capture, plate-waste insights, and existing StreamLine capabilities function as one coherent product suite.

FINTIVE Lead Product Designer / Sep 2024 – Dec 2025

Commercial lending fintech platform providing loan origination and credit management capabilities for banks and lending teams.

Led the end-to-end redesign of Fintive's cloud-based commercial loan-origination and credit-management platform, transforming an outdated, fragmented interface into a credible enterprise product with clearer workflows across underwriting, risk, approvals, collateral, and portfolio management.

Created a scalable design system spanning visual foundations, reusable components, data-dense patterns, and interaction standards, establishing a cohesive product language and stronger foundation for continued development.

Embedded directly with Fintive's executive leadership and delivery team, translating complex lending requirements into implementation-ready designs that strengthened enterprise credibility and sales demonstrations while supporting new banking contracts and revenue growth.

SAMSUNG SMARTTHINGS Senior Product Designer / Jul 2021 – Aug 2024

Global connected-home and IoT platform spanning consumer experiences and partner tools.

Owned UX/UI requirements and end-to-end product design for SmartThings US, partnering with global product, research, engineering, and senior leadership teams to shape strategy across Samsung's connected-home ecosystem.

As sole designer for an initiative extending SmartThings onto Samsung TVs, created the interaction model, new UI components, high-fidelity concepts, 3D environments, and motion prototypes for Home View and Smart Ambience. In a 200-participant beta, 84% found the experience intuitive and useful, key-feature engagement increased 30%, and 72% said it improved their TV experience.

Designed the SmartThings Certification Console, replacing a fragmented, email-dependent partner process with guided self-service, real-time status tracking, automated error feedback, contextual documentation, and API support.

Used partner interviews, journey mapping, rapid prototyping, and usability testing to reshape certification, contributing to 40% faster completion, 50% fewer support tickets, and a 63% improvement in developer satisfaction.

RAPTURE APPLICATIONS Founder & Principal Product Designer / Jan 2015 – Present
Independent product design and product engineering practice serving established companies and early-stage teams.

Provide embedded and fractional product leadership to established companies and early-stage teams, including Topanga, Fintive, and numerous startup engagements. Own work across product strategy, UX/UI, design systems, positioning, responsive development, and implementation, reducing the gap between design intent and shipped experience.

SELECTED EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Intouch Solutions / Senior Art Director / 2017
Led UI design for AbbVie launch pages and product microsites.

VelocityEHS / Senior UI Designer / 2016–2017
Redesigned the company's flagship B2B workplace safety platform.

NCC Media / Senior UI Designer / 2015–2016
Designed end-to-end experiences for a suite of B2B advertising applications.

The Integer Group / Art Director / 2014
Created Miller Lite retail experiences, contributed to a major brand redesign, and managed production from concept through completion.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield / Web Designer & Front-End Developer / 2013–2014
Designed, developed, and maintained responsive digital properties for regional plans across five states.

Additional design & development experience / 2006–2015
Discover Financial Services, University of Chicago Booth, Eversana Intouch, AbelsonTaylor, and independent clients

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Design & Systems

Figma, Design System Architecture, Component Libraries, Prototyping, Design-to-Code Implementation

Product Engineering

JavaScript, PHP, React, Next.js, Semantic HTML, Modern CSS, Responsive Development, Accessible UI Engineering, API Integration

Platforms & Architecture

Payload, Statamic, WordPress, Webflow, Framer, Headless CMS, Content Architecture, Performance & Technical SEO

ADDITIONAL CAPABILITIES

Creative Direction / Art Direction / Motion Design / Video Production / Audio Production & Sound Design / Lifestyle & Editorial Photography